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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/578,884	05/11/2006	Carl Jorgen Rummelhoff	3657-1036	5036
466	7590	05/19/2009		
YOUNG & THOMPSON 209 Madison Street Suite 500 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			EXAMINER DOERRLER, WILLIAM CHARLES	
			ART UNIT 3744	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 05/19/2009	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/578,884	RUMMELHOFF, CARL JORGEN	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	William C. Doerrler	3744	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 11 May 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5-11-2006</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Drawings

Figure 1 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawings in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 2 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 2 claims that the mixing of the evaporated LNG with the boil-off gas occurs upstream of the heat exchange. It is unclear how this is possible, as if the streams are mixed, heat exchange will occur unless the two streams are at identical temperatures.

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Likewise in claim 8, it is unclear how the combined mist separator and heat exchanger can be connected to the feed line upstream from itself. It is assumed that both of these claims are intending to claim that the streams are mixed upstream from the compressor.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 1,2,5-8 and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Irie et al (2004/0068993).

Irie et al discloses a method and apparatus for controlling temperature in a boil-off gas, wherein boil-off gas originating in an LNG storage tank is compressed and partially condensed, with the temperature of the boil-off gas being lowered by controllably mixing evaporating LNG into the stream of boil-off gas (as described in paragraph 17 of Irie et al). The boil-off gas is mixed with condensed LNG in mist separator 2 which is upstream from the compressor. In regard to maintaining the temperature of the boil-off gas by controlling the flow of the vaporizing LNG, see paragraphs 31 and 35. It is noted that Irie et al call device 2 a mist separator and that it will inherently exchange heat between the boil-off gas and the vaporizing LNG that are mixed within. In regard to claim 11, see valve 10.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 3 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Irie et al (2004/0068993) in view of Nelson et al (5,036,671).

Irie discloses applicant's basic inventive concept, a method and apparatus for controlling the temperature of boil-off gas by heat exchanging the boil-off gas with a controlled amount of liquefied gas which is vaporized during the heat transfer, substantially as claimed with the exception of mixing the fluids between compression stages. Nelson et al shows stream 82 which combines boil-off gas with liquefied gas between compression stages 64 and 89. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention from the teaching of Nelson et al to modify the boil-off gas cooler of Irie et al by combining the boil-off gas and the liquefied gas between compression stages to provide cooled fluid entering the higher compression stage to keep the compressor cool.

Claims 4 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Irie et al (2004/0068993) in view of Pozivil (2001-0042377).

Irie discloses applicant's basic inventive concept, a method and apparatus for controlling the temperature of boil-off gas by heat exchanging the boil-off gas with a controlled amount of liquefied gas which is vaporized during the heat transfer,

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substantially as claimed with the exception of mixing the fluids following the compression stages. Pozivil shows mixer 46 which combines compressed boil-off gas with liquefied gas following final compression stage 30. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of applicant's invention from the teaching of Nelson et al to modify the boil-off gas cooler of Irie et al by combining the boil-off gas and the liquefied gas following the final compression stages to cool the fluid that will reenter the storage tank.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Halse, Lee, Berg, Proctor et al, Wilkinson, Engdahl and Jones show systems for heat exchange between boil-off gas and liquefied gas.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Doerrler whose telephone number is (571) 272-4807. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 6:30-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cheryl Tyler can be reached on (571) 272-4834. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/William C Doerrler/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3744

WCD